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House of Representatives

The House met at 12:30 p.m., and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore [Mr. COBLE].

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,

June 4, 1996.

I hereby designate the Honorable HOWARD COBLE to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

NEWT GINGRICH,

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING BUSINESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of May 12, 1995, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning hour debates. The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to not to exceed 30 minutes, and each Member except the majority and minority leader limited to not to exceed 5 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE] for 5 minutes.

GINGRICH-DOLE MEDICARE PLAN AND DEMOCRATIC ALTERNATIVE

Mr. PALLONE. Mr. Speaker, this weekend on NBC's "Meet the Press," House Speaker NEWT GINGRICH went on the attack on Medicare once again, and now he claims that the President and the Democrats in Congress are deliberately misleading the American people about his plan; that is, the Republican plan, so-called plan to save Medicare. I would like to tell my colleagues that nothing could be further from the truth. Last year the American people overwhelmingly rejected the Repub-

lican plan to cut \$270 billion from Medicare to pay for tax breaks primarily for the wealthy, and the Speaker knows the public opinion is not on his side, so he is trying to confuse the American people by making extreme attacks on Democrats' integrity rather than addressing the Medicare issue correctly.

I guess we should not be surprised because it was Speaker GINGRICH who last year said it was his goal to see Medicare, and I quote, "wither on the vine." The bottom line, Mr. Speaker, is that the Republicans want to use the budget, this budget that they passed a few weeks ago and is now in conference with the Senate, as the vehicle for transforming Medicare in a very radical way.

My position is, and I believe it is that of most Democrats, if changes in Medicare are to come they should not be made in the context of the budget, they should not be a vehicle to make cuts in Medicare that would be used for other priorities, such as tax breaks for the wealthy or increased defense spending or whatever other initiatives the Republicans plan for the budget.

Now, we know this Wednesday the Medicare trustees are going to come out with their annual report and already we are hearing that the Speaker and the Republican leadership are going to use this report, which will show again that Medicare does need some changes in order for it not to become insolvent 5 or 6 years from now, but the bottom line is that the Republican leadership plan to save Medicare is not an effort to make some adjustments in Medicare so that it remains solvent and so that the money is available to continue the program as it currently exists. Rather, they want to make major radical structural changes in the Medicare program that will reduce the quality of care, will reduce senior's ability to choose their own doctors or hospitals and basically force

most senior citizens in either managed care programs where they do not have choices or alternatively make them pay more out of pocket for the services that they get.

I wanted to point out in the time I have remaining here what I would call a number of key issues that I think reveal the true colors of the Gingrich-Dole Medicare plan. First, the Republican leadership claims that Medicare is going broke and they are saving it. Well, last year they knew they were cutting Medicare before the Medicare trustees' report came out. The trustees' report was used and will be used again this year to masquerade their true motives, which is to cut Medicare for tax cuts for the wealthy.

Second, it is likely that the Medicare trustees will report that the part A trust fund will become insolvent, they are claiming, I think, we expect the report to say that the insolvency projection is about 5 years from now. Well, Democrats are interested in shoring up the Medicare trust fund and have voted for plans that achieve this goal.

President Clinton has proposed a plan that will extend the life of the Medicare program, if you will, for at least another 10 years. So this notion that somehow the Republicans are saving Medicare is simply false. The Democrats have put forward proposals that would save Medicare and prevent solvency but not make basic structural changes in the Medicare program.

Third, the GOP claim they are merely slowing the rate of growth of Medicare with their drastic cuts. Well, let us be honest about it. When the Gingrich-Dole rate of growth does not keep pace with the increasing medical costs, then seniors will either pay more or see reduced services and second class health care.

This was Speaker GINGRICH's main point over the weekend on "Meet the Press." He claimed, oh, we are just slowing the growth of Medicare, we are

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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not making cuts. Well, if the growth does not keep up with inflation how in the world are average senior citizens going to get quality care or the same level of services they get now?

Fourth, the GOP claims the Gingrich-Dole Medicare plan offers choices. In fact, they are taking away senior choices. Their plan will co-op senior citizens into managed care plans or HMO's, forcing them to give up their choice of doctors.

And lastly, I wanted to mention, Mr. Speaker, how the Gingrich-Dole plan differs from the Democratic alternatives. In addition to the steep cuts, the Gingrich-Dole plan makes radical structural changes to Medicare. For instance, it calls for steeper cuts to hospitals, compounded with extreme Medicaid cuts, and hospitals will simply close.

Additionally, the Gingrich-Dole plan will allow doctors remaining in the traditional Medicare to charge seniors more in out-of-pocket costs. The protection existing now when you go to the doctor, he cannot charge you more than 15 percent. That is gone. Now they can charge whatever they want.

And, last, concerning the controversial medical accounts, the MSA's, or I call them the wealthy-healthy accounts, the nonpartisan Congressional Budget Office found any plan to incorporate the wealthy-healthy accounts will actually hasten Medicare's insolvency. It will cost the trustees over \$3 billion. That is certainly no way to save Medicare.

WHAT GENDER GAP? LIBERAL MEDIA SPIN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentleman from Florida [Mr. STEARNS] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mr. STEARNS. Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from New Jersey [Mr. PALLONE], the former Governor of Colorado has been speaking over the weekend to the Perot party. He indicated he supported President Clinton in 1992 but he can no longer support President Clinton because the Democrats and the President are demagoging the issue on Medicare. There are indeed no cuts. In fact, the amount of money that is going to Medicare is going up every year; it is going up almost 7.3 percent.

That being said, Mr. Speaker, I am here to talk about the gender gap and how women identify with this as a political issue. Now this gender gap is touted by the National Organization of Women as being in their favor. It is mentioned in the Presidential election that one candidate has a gender gap problem among voters. What does this all really mean?

Well, Concerned Women for America recently hired the Wirthlin Group to conduct a survey, which directly challenges the stereotypical view of the gender gap drawing women to the lib-

eral position on controversial social issues.

Its conducted survey found when asking their party affiliation, it did show 40 percent of the women out of this 1,000 people that they asked, 40 percent of the women identified themselves as Democrat, 29 percent as Republican and 25 percent as Independent. The Democrats appear to have an advantage because the gender gap assumes women voters hold liberal positions on many issues. This assumption would appear to create a risk for candidates who take a conservative position on issues.

In terms of political philosophy, however, 53 percent of all the women surveyed identified themselves as conservative; that is, women who identified themselves as Democrats were also identifying themselves as conservatives. This clearly shows party affiliation does not automatically translate into liberal ideology nor an outright rejection of conservatism.

While the NOW organization is often accepted as the standard position for women voters, this organization actually emphasizes the gender gap by promoting the notion that women's issues such as abortion are the sole determinant for women voters. Well, this is not true. Only 36 percent of the women surveyed have a formidable and favorable impression of NOW which portrays itself as a voice of American women.

The survey also found out that only 1 percent of women listing abortion as their key issue of all the issues. When asked about abortion, 55 percent of women were pro-life, contrasting the views of NOW who are strongly pro-abortion. An even larger majority, 66 percent, favor adoption for tax credit, using tax credits. These findings indeed support a gender gap in favor of conservative voters.

Women identified a decline in family values as the single most important issue. The NOW group proposes a generally liberal position with regard to family views, particularly dealing with homosexual rights and welfare reform. Welfare reform pits 66 percent of women against the views of liberals and the NOW group and in favor of reforms such as family caps.

The Wirthlin study depicts the gender gap as really not a gap at all. Rather, there has been a lack of effective leadership to articulate the conservative position to women. On abortion, adoption, family values, welfare reform, and homosexuality rights women are just frankly conservative and frankly share the Republican view. The media has played a large part in discouraging conservative candidates by concluding conservative social policies alienate women voters. This poll shows just the opposite, and what we have, frankly, Mr. Speaker, is a liberal spin on the issue of the gender gap.

Liberal politicians are already detecting this, though. They realize the conservative positions are the way to go and to promote ideas. Conservatives

during the Reagan era were able to attract millions of registered Democrat voters largely on the strength of Reagan's social conservatism. As conservative leaders, we have the ability to attract these voters, including these so-called women's issues. The gender gap is removed.

Mr. Speaker, the gender gap is a figment of the liberals and the media's imagination. For once the issues are clearly explained by the overwhelming majority of women today of all political persuasions accepting the conservative approach to abortion, adoption, family values, welfare reform, and homosexual rights. Today's women are basically conservative.

WHAT THE GENDER GAP IS ALL ABOUT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of May 12, 1995, the gentlewoman from Colorado [Mrs. SCHROEDER] is recognized during morning business for 5 minutes.

Mrs. SCHROEDER. Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to be following the prior gentleman onto the floor, because I want to talk a bit about the gender gap and how I think they still just do not get it.

America's women are engaging in a gender gap because they are very concerned that the Government does not understand what has happened to their families, and American women are very family based. That was the whole purpose of this Stand for Children organization this weekend, where hundreds of thousands of people and organizations came together to say things have changed so drastically for America's families, but the Government does not understand it, the corporations do not understand it, institutions do not understand it. And if we do not suddenly start understanding what this is about, we are looking at real disaster.

Let me just point out a bit why I think things have changed so much. I graduated from high school in 1958. I want to read to you what came from my high school book on home economics about how I should be a good wife.

No. 1, it said: When your husband comes home, have dinner ready. Plan ahead the night before a delicious meal. Men like to be fed right as they come through the door, and they will feel very comforted if they know that they can always count on that.

No. 2, prepare yourself at least 15 minutes before your husband is coming home. Be sure you are refreshed. Touch up your makeup, put a ribbon in your hair, clear away the clutter in the house, get the children cleaned up. Remember, they are little treasures and they must look like little treasures. Minimize all noise. Turn off all machines in the house and be there at the door to greet him and welcome him home from the very, very difficult day he has had at work.

Do not greet him with problems. Do not greet him with complaints. Do not